

### ***Adler Crafts Legislation Based Upon Recommendations of his Barnegat Bay Roundtable***

Ocean County – Congressman John Adler, who formed and hosted a Barnegat Bay Roundtable, today introduced legislation to help clean Barnegat Bay and put into place a plan to ensure its long-term health. The Congressman's roundtable discovered that inefficient stormwater basins and a lack of a database to monitor a basin's impact on bay water quality are major obstacles to Barnegat Bay's health. Adler's legislation creates a competitive grant program for the 28 National Estuary programs to monitor, assess, research and restore estuaries with inefficient stormwater basins.

"The continued pollution of Barnegat Bay is a potential environmental and economic disaster for Ocean County," Congressman John Adler said. "Middle-class families, seniors and small businesses dependent on Barnegat Bay deserve commonsense solutions to its problems. We should all work together to restore Barnegat Bay's health."

After being elected to the House of Representatives, Congressman Adler formed a Barnegat Bay Roundtable to try and find solutions to the problems which imperil the Bay's health. The Roundtable consists of local scientists, fishermen and community members interested in cleaning up Barnegat Bay. Below are quotes from local stakeholders who support the Congressman's bill:

#### **Local Officials**

"Barnegat Bay is a natural treasure, a major recreational resource and a large part of the local economy," said Berkeley Mayor Jason Varano. "We all need to work together to bring the Bay back to health. I applaud Congressman Adler's efforts in introducing this critical bill."

"Barnegat Bay is recognized as a national asset, it is a major recreational area and critical part of our local economy. Numerous species of marine life along our entire east coast are dependent on Barnegat Bay as a nursery area. Today it is in serious peril, our citizens along with local, state and federal officials need to work together to save our Bay. When our water degrades, there is no life, we all live by the grace of water and a healthy eco-system. I applaud Congressman Adler's efforts in introducing this critical bill," said Stafford Councilman John Spodofora, who coauthored Stafford's first in the state ordinance regulating the use of fertilizers.

#### **Environmentalists**

"The proposed bill would provide funds to support ongoing efforts to restore failed stormwater basins in Barnegat Bay. To get an idea of the scale of the problem, the Ocean County government and other partners, including Rutgers University, have identified and mapped out several thousand basins constructed during the past 20 years in Barnegat Bay watershed alone. This bill will fund projects to improve basin hydrologic and biogeochemical functions, and thus reduce the nutrient contributions, water quality impairments, and other problems caused by failed basins," said L. Stanton Hales, Jr., Director of the Barnegat Bay Partnership.

"The bill introduced by Congressman Adler addresses one of the most pressing issues associated with the decline in water and habitat quality in heavily populated coastal watersheds--lack of effective stormwater management controls. Stormwater basins that don't function well can contribute excess nutrients to our bays and estuaries leading to nuisance algal blooms, loss of critical habitat for fish and shellfish, and consequently the loss of economic benefits to coastal communities which rely on healthy ecosystems to support tourism and recreation activities. This measure will provide much needed funding to restore and protect valuable coastal resources, and will certainly make a difference for the health of estuaries such as Barnegat Bay in New Jersey," said Michael P. De Luca, Senior Associate Director, Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences, Rutgers University.

"This legislation will help clean up one of the major pollution sources hurting Barnegat Bay. It is key to cleaning up the Bay. There are over 2700 old stormbasins in the Bay's watershed which have inadequate pollution controls in place. Congressman Adler's legislation will provide much needed funding to clean up these polluting basins. We thank him for his leadership in securing federal funding to help us here in New Jersey to protect and restore this nationally significant estuary," said Tim Dillingham, Executive Director of the American Littoral Society.

"Mr. Adler's Barnegat Bay bill is perfectly timed for our nation's birthday. This historic Bay was the home of American Privateers during the Revolutionary War. The Barnegat story is steeped in history and tradition, much of which carries on today with recreational and commercial fishing and waterfowl hunting. Barnegat Bay is one of the most beautiful places in New Jersey. I am pleased that John Adler is taking a big step to protect this treasure for future generations," said Jim Donofrio, Executive Director of the Recreational Fishing Alliance.

"Improved storm-water management is one of the most critical steps in the suite of actions we need to take to restore Barnegat Bay back to health. The Sierra Club of Ocean County is pleased to join hands with Congressman Adler in support of this important bill and laud him on taking a leadership role in saving Barnegat Bay", said A. Gregory Auriemma, Esq., Ocean

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**Background:**

Barnegat Bay provides more than \$3.3 billion in economic benefits annually to New Jersey. The Bay is critical to boaters, swimmers, fishermen, hunters, tourists, nature enthusiasts, tourism-based businesses and coastal communities. The Congressman tried to pull from all of these groups, as well as environmentalists and researchers interested in the Bay's health, to form his roundtable.

The Bay is plagued by pollution from stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff contains pollutants from fertilizers, pesticides, motor oil and other pollutants typically associated with residential and commercial development. One way to help reduce this pollution is through effective stormwater basins which slow runoff from entering an estuary and treat the water for certain pollutants.

The Congressman's Barnegat Bay Roundtable believes that more efficient stormwater basins can help the Bay survive. Below are the recommendations heard most often at the Roundtable discussion.

- One of the most effective strategies to improve coastal water quality is the proper design, construction and maintenance of stormwater structures.
- At Barnegat Bay, there is a need to retrofit stormwater basins that do not function properly, do not exist, or use antiquated technology.
- Barnegat Bay's watershed contains more than 2,700 stormwater basins, many of which are improperly designed or poorly maintained.
- Finally, no comprehensive database exists to monitor the effectiveness of the Bay's stormwater basins.

The Congressman's bill aims to provide critical funding for monitoring, assessment, research and stormwater basin restoration. The bill will direct the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a competitive grant program for the 28 National Estuary Programs (of which Barnegat Bay is one) for improvement of inefficient stormwater basins.

The program provides funds to improve a stormwater basin's pollution control capabilities, but also changes the behavior of the agencies responsible for the upkeep of the basins. A grant recipient would be required to monitor the water quality of an estuary to determine if the

stormwater basin is functioning properly and controlling and treating pollutants from entering the water.

The bill would authorize \$20 million for the grant program for each fiscal year from FY2011 through FY2015. Applicants would have a 20% matching requirement.